

**From:** David Hallowell  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I've have been involved with computers for many years and have seen the anti-competitive business practices first hand. Microsoft always talk about innovation, however they have done the most in the history of computing to stop other companies innovating.

Therefore I believe the current settlement with MS is a BAD idea, Microsoft needs strict legal sanctions, the current settlement gives them little more than a slap on the wrist.

Microsoft's latest operating system (Windows XP) carries on the current Microsoft practice of using bundling to try and kill off their competition. MSN Messenger is integrated into Windows XP in such a way that there is no obvious was to remove it, the only way to remove it is to do an internet search for an undocumented file to edit - this is beyond the skill of an average user.

As a person who does not use Windows, and instead prefers to use an open source operating system (Linux), I find it difficult to operate in a world without Microsoft software. I often get documents sent to me in the proprietary Microsoft Word format, I can't listen to online radio stations because most of the broadcast in Windows Media Format, I can't communicate with Windows using friends who have signed up with MSN Messenger. The reason that most people use Windows is that it has such a stranglehold on the market, it's difficult to use anything else unless you make a big sacrifice with interoperability with Windows users.

Many people are working on products which make it easier for users of other systems to work with others, however Microsoft make this task difficult by changing file formats, and modifying protocols.

Microsoft is effectively a bully-boy, they have the money to get what they want and don't care who they crush to get there. They have caused an untold amount of damage on the industry.

Therefore, any punishment should take into account this damage and must also set out clear guidelines for how they should behave in the future. If they break any of the guidelines in the future the punishment should be a lot harsher.

Ultimately we need all the protocols and document formats opened up by Microsoft. The Microsoft Office document formats have become so commonplace that people just assume that your computer can read them and people are surprised when they get emailed back by myself informing them that I don't have any software that can read the Microsoft Office

formats easily.

In the consumer electronics world we have VHS which means that all video recorders are manufactured to the VHS standard, therefore you can go to the local video rental shop, place a tape in any VCR and it'll work correctly, you don't have to buy a particular brand VCR, as long as it's VHS it'll work.

Microsoft Office has become the 'de-facto' standard, therefore the file formats should be opened in all past and future versions, this will allow anyone to write an office suite that can read MS Office formats. This would mean office software manufacturers would be competing on quality and features, rather than MS relying on a lock-in to their file format.

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David Hallowell <dave@mozthemes.org>